



Maine Human Rights Commission

51 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0051

Physical location: 19 Union Street, Augusta, ME 04330

Phone (207) 624-6290 ■ Fax (207) 624-8729 ■ TTY: Maine Relay 711

www.maine.gov/mhrc

Amy M. Sneirson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Barbara Archer Hirsch
COMMISSION COUNSEL

October 25, 2016

Dear Colleagues:

As you know, the Maine Human Rights Commission (the “Commission”) – the state agency charged with the responsibility of enforcing Maine’s anti-discrimination laws – investigates complaints of unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, education, access to public accommodations, extension of credit, and offensive names. An important part of our statutory mandate is to give parties an opportunity to try to resolve disputes, something that the Commission does at various times in our agency processes. The Maine Human Rights Act authorizes the Commission to establish a mediation program, and we did so in 2012.

Four years ago, the Commission established a five-member roster of highly-qualified and experienced mediators to provide mediation in Commission cases, our Third Party Neutral Mediation Program (“Program”). The Program has been a tremendous success, helping parties resolve disputes cost-effectively and often. One of the originally-rostered mediators is no longer with the Program, and our four remaining rostered mediators have become incredibly busy as the number of mediations has grown over time. Program mediators are contractors, not Commission employees, and earn a \$350 stipend per mediation conducted. The Commission also has begun to utilize the services of our rostered mediators to conduct post-reasonable grounds mediations (which the Maine Human Rights Act calls “conciliations”); we utilize separate contracts for these conciliation services, but the arrangement – contracted-for services and \$350/conciliation – are essentially the same. With the numbers of mediations still rising, we need to add mediators to our roster; we are looking to add three to four Program mediators at this time.

Applications to join the Mediation Program roster must be received by the MHRC on or before 5 p.m. on November 22. We hope to make our roster selections within the following month, or by December 12.

Enclosed is an information sheet with more details about the Mediation Program and this call for applications. For a copy of the Mediation Program Handbook adopted by the Commission, or for more information, please contact me at Amy.Sneirson@mhrc.maine.gov.

Thank you in advance for considering this important work, and for assisting us with distributing this information to potentially interested parties. For more information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Amy M. Sneirson
Executive Director

Enclosure



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Third-Party Neutral Mediation Program Information Sheet October 25, 2016

Request for Qualifications

Candidates interested in serving as impartial mediators in cases filed with the Commission should forward a statement of interest, qualifications and experience to Melody Piper, Public Service Manager, Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0051.

Submissions must be received by the Commission on or before 5 p.m. on November 15, 2016.

Submissions will be received and reviewed by the Executive Director. Invitations to join the roster of mediators will issue within 30 days after the closing date of this solicitation.

Mediator Qualifications

The Commission will focus on the following criteria to determine which candidates will be invited to join our Third-Party Neutral Mediation Program roster:

1. Mediator training (preferably multi-day training that includes role-playing techniques);
2. Certifications or membership on other mediator rosters;
3. Relevant experience as a mediator;
4. Knowledge of the Maine Human Rights Act and related civil rights laws; and
5. Three letters of reference (to be supplied with the candidate's application, from parties or attorneys who have mediated with the applicant and can attest to the applicant's skills and experience as a mediator).

Program Administration and Coordination

When assigned a case through the Commission's Third-Party Neutral Mediation Program, mediators will be paid a stipend, which shall be expected to cover the mediator's travel and other expenses. The stipend will be \$350 per mediation, although that may increase or decrease in later fiscal years, at the discretion of the Commission. We expect mediations to occur at the Commission offices in Augusta and will provide suitable, accessible meeting space. The Commission will provide some training regarding the Maine Human Rights Act and related federal laws to rostered mediators, but also anticipates that selected mediators will have significant knowledge of these laws before joining the roster.